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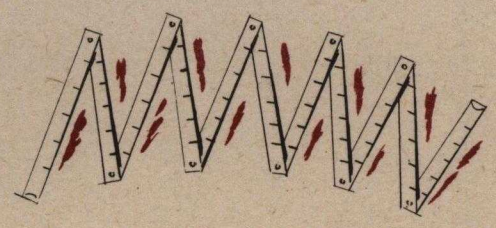
How to use the Bigelow Weavers' Room Planner!

The Room Planner enables you to find the furniture arrangements best suited to your rooms, without arranging and re-arranging heavy furniture. It is intended for two groups of women. You, already in a home but with plans to move or redecorate after the war, will find it helpful. You newlyweds or war-time brides can use it to plan your future rooms, and arrange the furniture you hope to buy.

When moving time actually comes, you can cut down the cost of moving. Give the movers your floor plan for each room and they can place the furniture correctly and quickly.

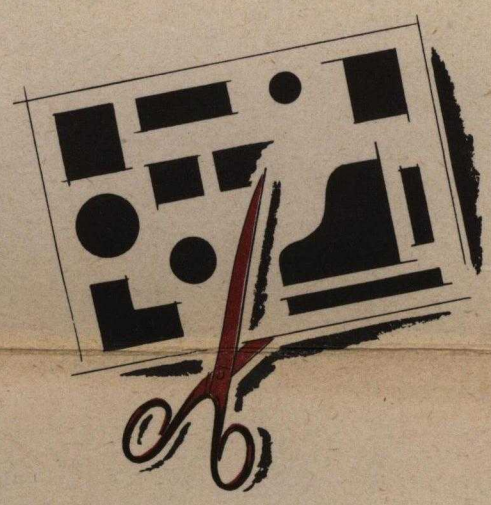
1 LAY OUT THE ROOM PLAN

Begin by taking actual measurements of your room or rooms, or decide the size room you hope to have. Lay the measurements out on the graph paper. Each division on the graph paper represents one foot. Indicate all doorways, windows, radiators, and any recesses or alcoves your room may have.



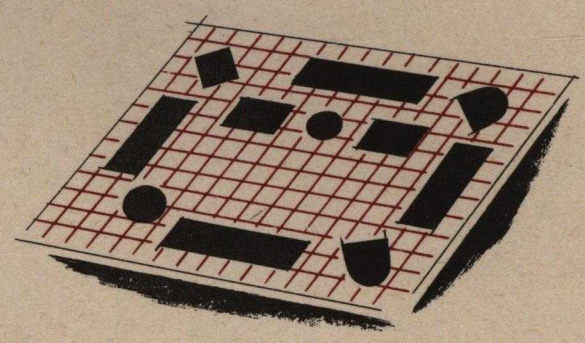
2 CUT OUT THE FURNITURE

The pieces represent standard furniture sizes. Whenever there is a choice of sizes, cut out the ones that match, or most nearly match, your own. If you have or will want furniture other than those pieces included here, take their measurements and cut out your own pieces. Be sure to adhere to the original ½ inch = 1 foot scale.



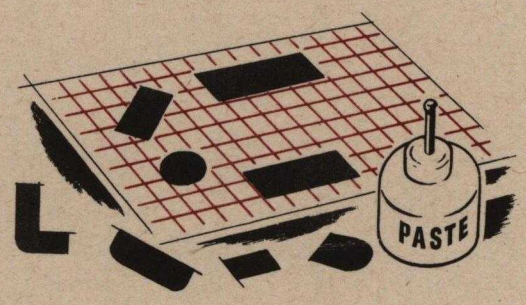
3 ARRANGE YOUR FURNITURE

Arrange and re-arrange the furniture until you have found the arrangement that suits you best. Here, your clippings from magazines and newspapers, your ideas from model rooms and displays, will prove very useful. In addition, you will find many suggestions in the accompanying Thumbnail Decorator. Refer to it often.



4 PASTE FURNITURE IN PLACE

You have found the arrangement you like . . . the arrangement suited to the shape of the room. Does the whole family approve? Then go ahead and paste. Now, for a complete reference sheet for shopping and decorating, clip sample swatches of your colors and type of fabrics you want to finished room plan. Or, if you are ambitious, you will have fun making up a working plan like the one on the cover of the Thumbnail Decorator. Indicate the colors and patterns you have chosen for your floor covering, curtains, upholstery, and slipcovers, by pasting colored samples of material or paper on the floor, at windows, and on furniture cut-outs.



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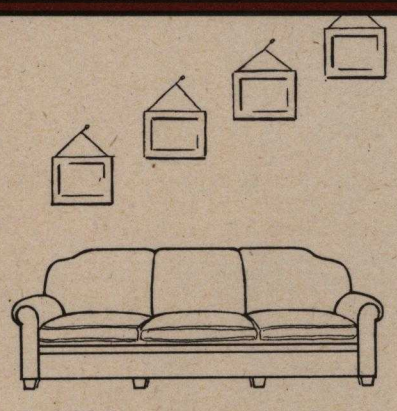
½ inch = 1 foot

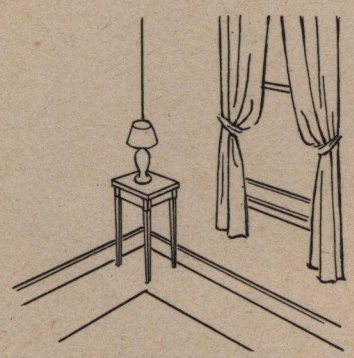
STORE YOUR FURNITURE HERE

It is wise to keep extra furniture cut-outs for possible future use. You may change your mind, rearrange furniture, and need to add or substitute other pieces. Pin or paste a small envelope here and store your furniture cut-outs in it.

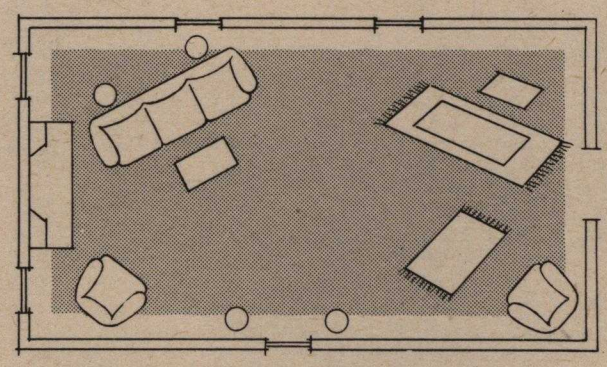
BASIC DECORATING DON'TS . . .



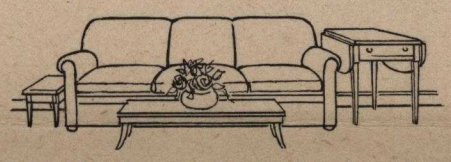
Bad. If several pictures are hung on one wall, group them in a rectangle or place in straight line. Conceal wire by putting hook behind picture. Hang small pictures at eye level. Larger ones higher.



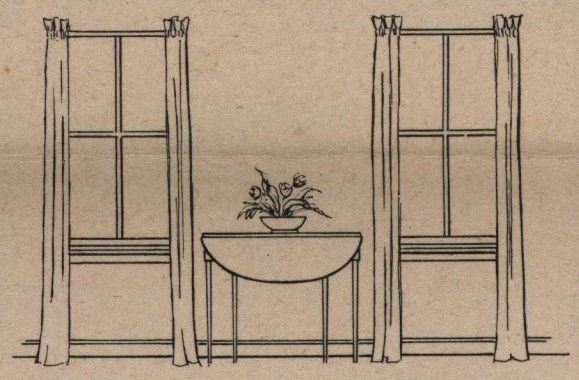
Unattractive corner. No reason for the table being there. Leave corner empty or use a piece designed for corner, i.e., corner bookcase or cupboard.



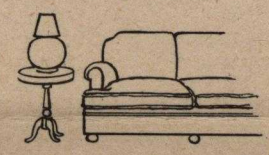
Avoid cater-cornered arrangements. When scatter rugs are used as accent pieces on the carpet, they should be placed parallel to walls. Furniture should also be arranged parallel to walls.



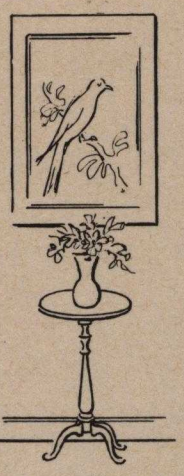
The tables here are out of scale. Always have end tables the same height as chair or sofa arms; coffee table within easy, comfortable reach of sofa occupant.



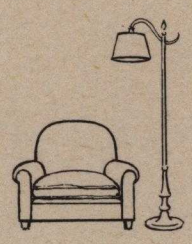
Avoid skimpy curtains. You'll be wise to buy a less expensive material and have full, generous curtains than to buy more expensive material and find you must skimp.



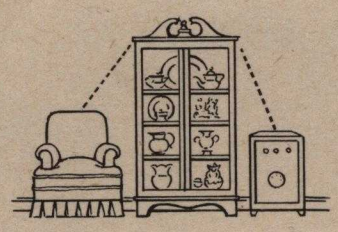
Never put large lamps on small tables, or dainty lamp-shades on massive bases. Remember scale.



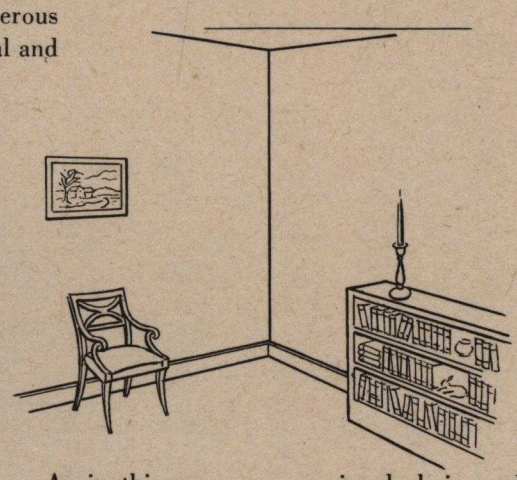
Again, scale has been forgotten. The table is overpowered by the too-massive picture.



An incomplete unit; chair, good light, but no table handy!



Don't forget *balance.* Height is as important as length and width.



As in this case, an occasional chair used merely as a spacefiller is a mistake. It becomes useless; wastes an entire corner.

NOTE: If you would like more plan paper and furniture cut-outs, ask your Bigelow Dealer for them. Your Bigelow Dealer will be glad to consult with you about your future rug and carpet requirements.

RUGS & CARPETS BY THE
BIGELOW WEAVERS
Woven on Power Looms in U. S. A.

CUT OUT THE PIECES YOU PLAN TO USE

Same scale as floor plan: ½ inch = 1 foot

THE LIVING ROOM... standard sizes of furniture... cut on lines representing the size you have or plan to get.

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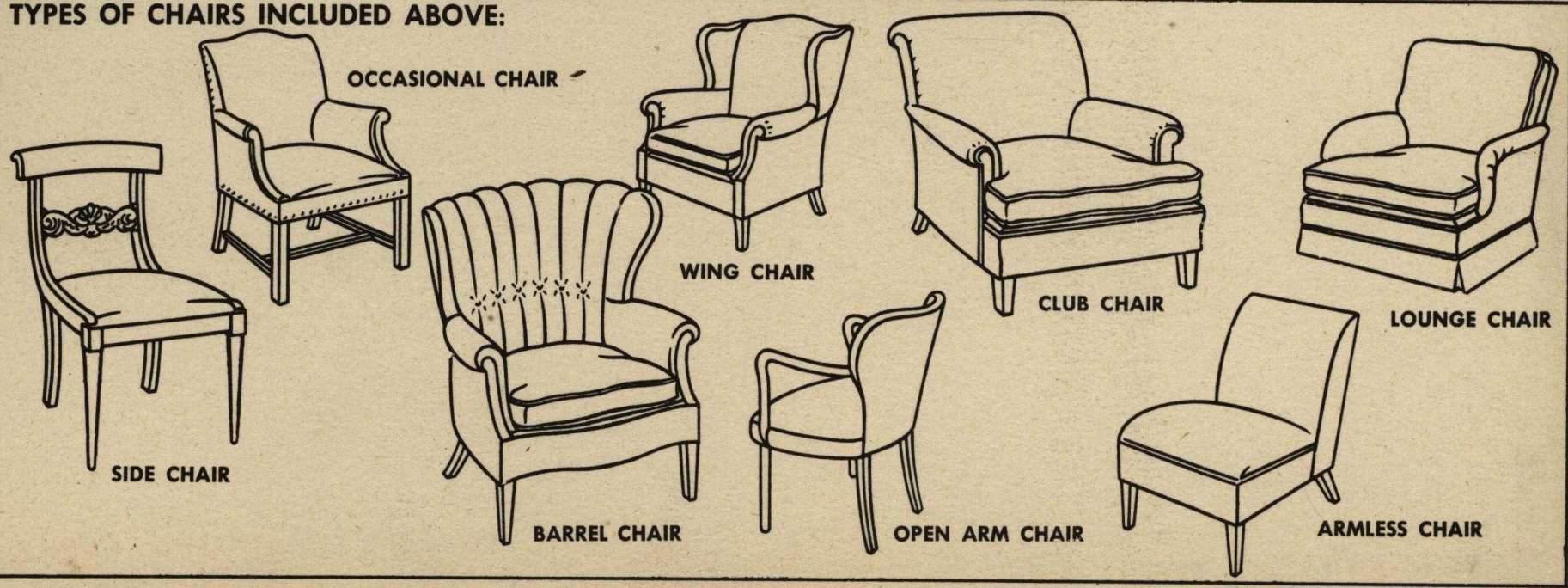
TYPES OF CHAIRS INCLUDED ABOVE:

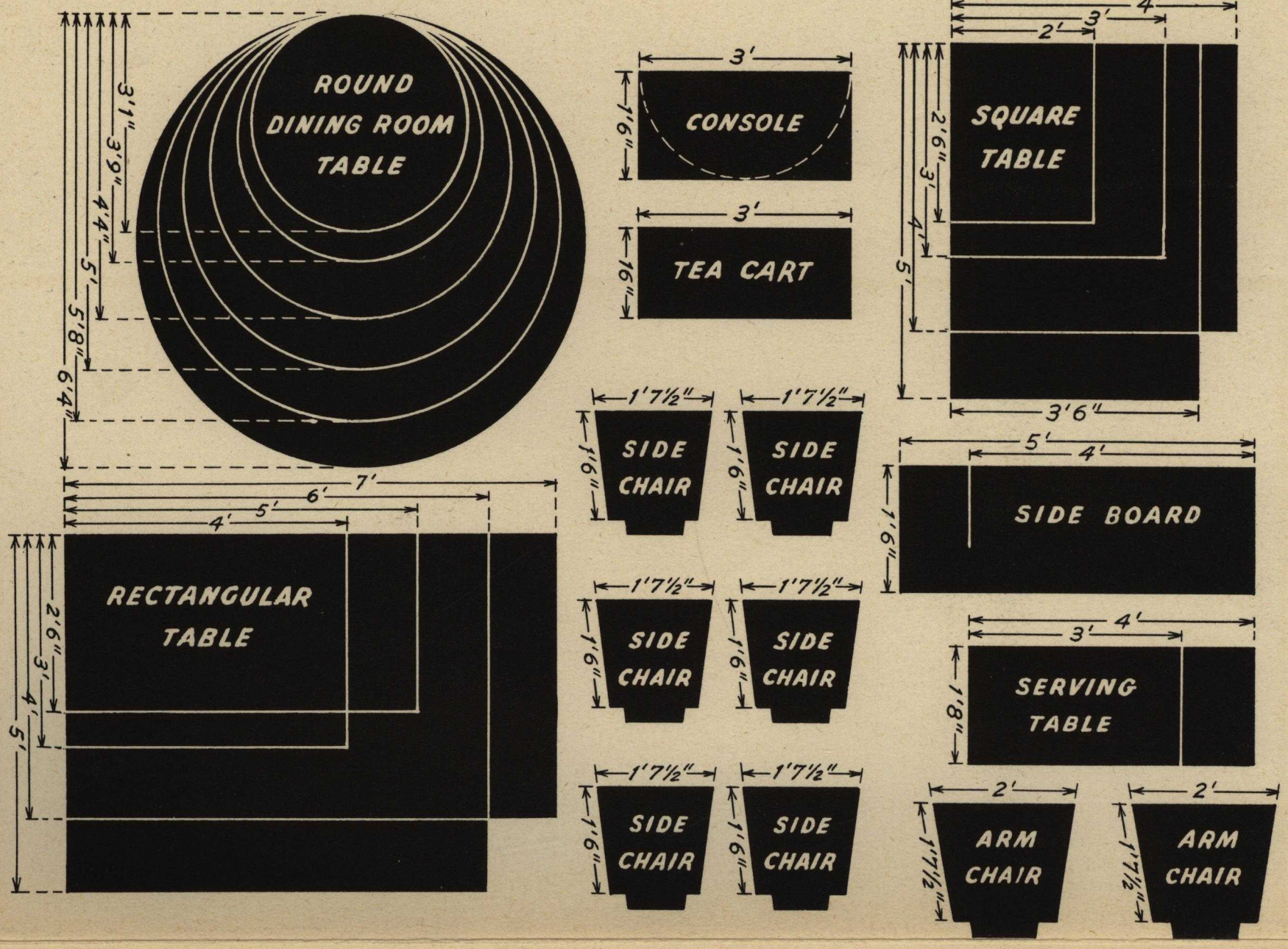


Bigelow Weavers' Room Planner

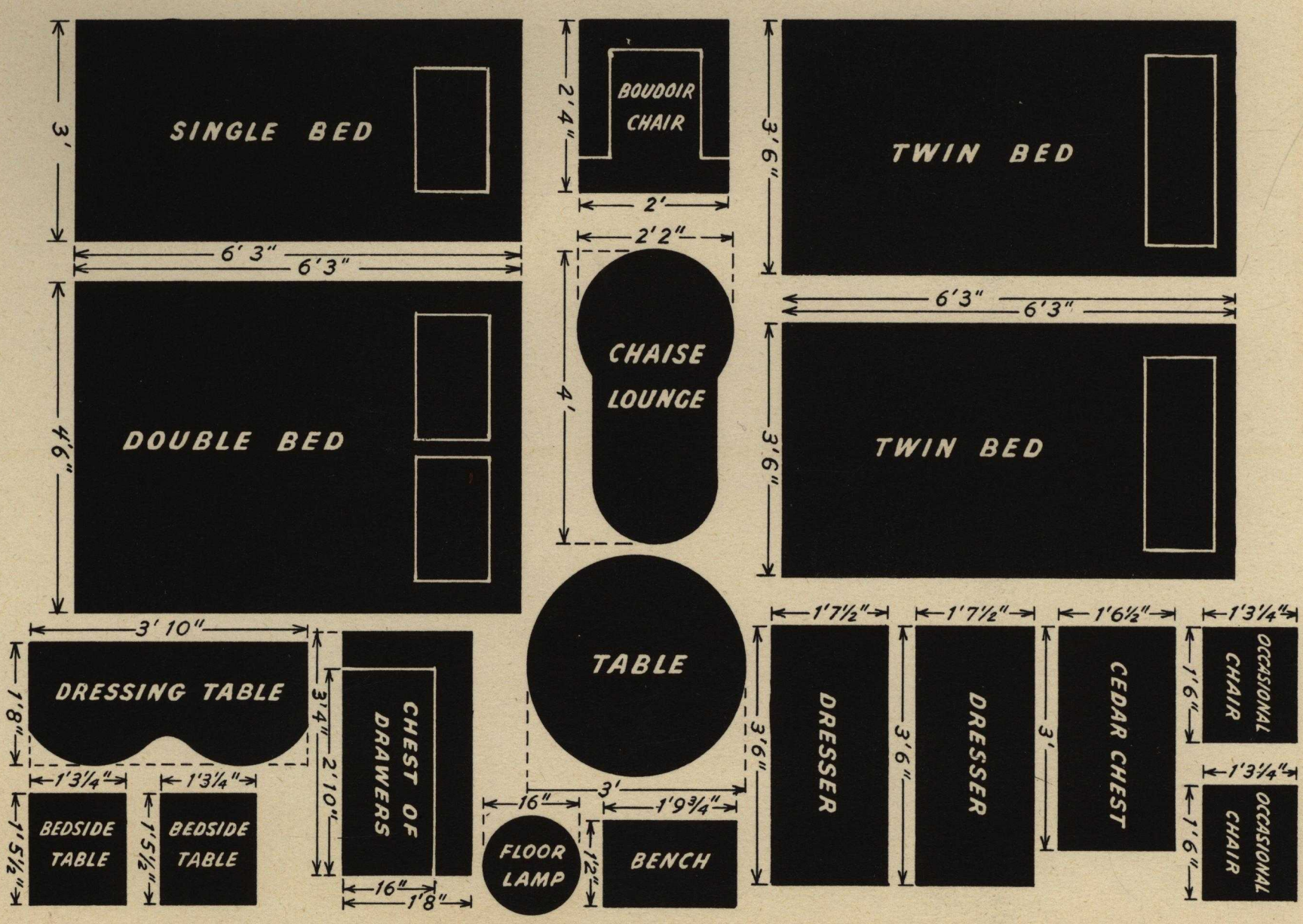
CUT OUT THE PIECES YOU PLAN TO USE

Same scale as floor plan: ½ inch = 1 foot

THE DINING ROOM . . . standard sizes of furniture . . . cut on lines representing the size you have or plan to get.



THE BEDROOM . . . standard sizes of furniture . . . cut on lines representing the size you have or plan to get.



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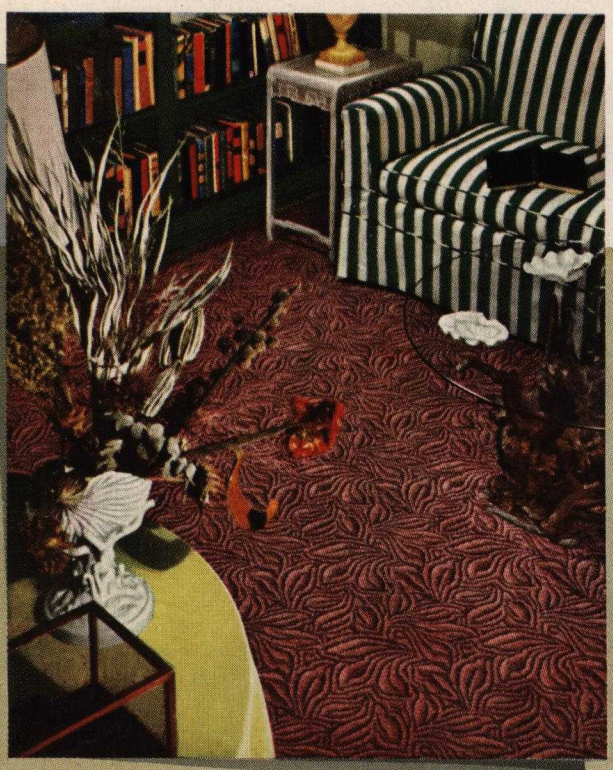
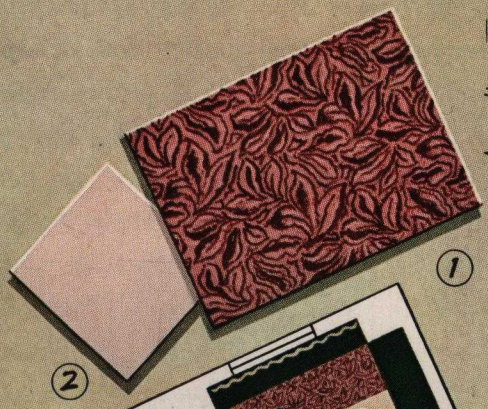
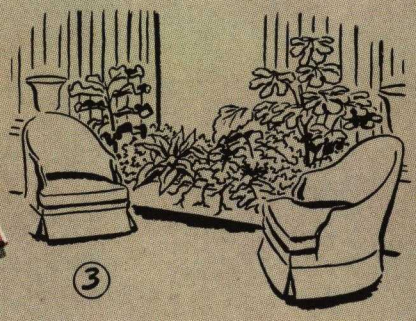
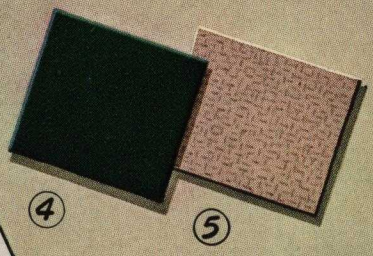
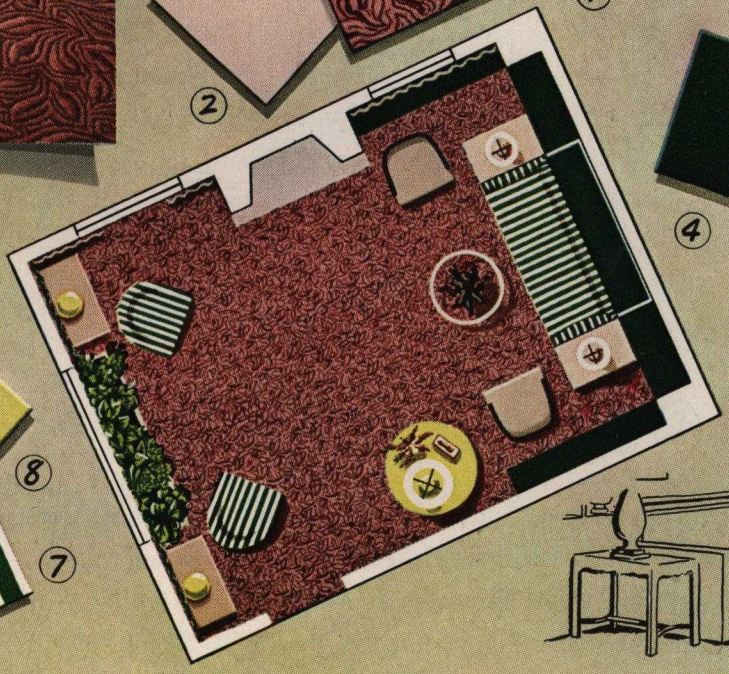


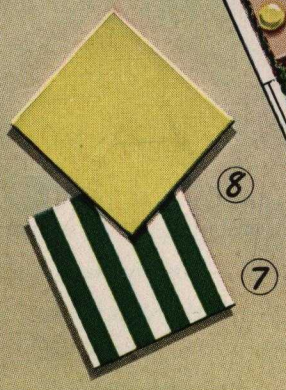
This lovely room began with the plan below. In this book you learn how to make your own plans and decorate your home, starting at the floor.

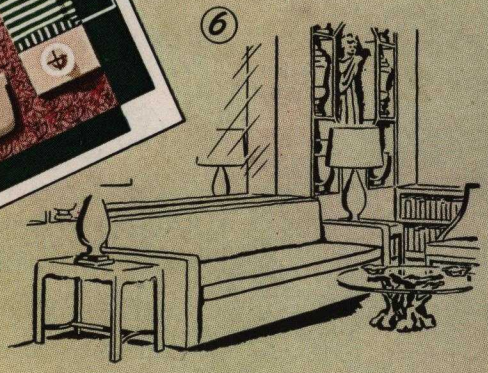










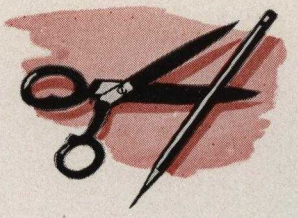


KEY

1. Bigelow wall-to-wall carpet
2. Color of walls, north-wall curtains, end tables
3. View of window group
4. Color of west-wall curtains, built-in cabinets, bookcases
5. Tweed for two chairs, color for consoles
6. View of sofa group, cabinets, bookcases
7. Cotton fabric for sofa and two chairs
8. Felt for table cover, color of lamps beside window

BIGELOW WEAVERS'

Thumbnail decorator



The thumbnail decorator

In this booklet you will find, reduced to their briefest, most readily understood form, all the basic decorating rules and principles. Experts can and do successfully break some of them, but they are the safe, sure rules for most of us.

There are only three things to consider in the planning of any room: *Selection*, how to make your decisions in proper sequence; *Harmony*, how to plan color schemes for harmony and beauty; and *Arrangement*, how to arrange furniture for convenience and beauty. These, then, are the three parts of this booklet. But no one part stands alone. All are related.

After you have read this little book, you will have all the information necessary to make a plan of your room for tomorrow. Look at the front cover. See how the decorator made his plan. See the photograph of the pleasing room which resulted. You can do the same thing yourself with the enclosed Room Planner. The finished sheet will be a valuable shopping and decorating guide when you can again buy for your home.

Listed on the last page are some books on interior decoration which make good reading for anyone interested in having a beautiful home. For more detailed information they are recommended.

① Selection

First you must know where to begin . . . what decisions come first, second and so on to a beautiful finish. Here is such a system. It is a simple one, consisting of only five steps. First, the floor; second, the walls; third, the windows; fourth, the furniture coverings; fifth, the accessories. These five steps can be followed in the planning of any room. Now the rules to guide you in making your decisions in this easy, systematic way:

YOUR FLOOR Begin with the floor. Your floor covering is, next to the walls, the largest single area of color. But why not begin with the walls then? Because:

You will probably change your walls more frequently than your carpet.

It is easier to select your carpet first and match your wall color to it than vice versa.

Bigelow carpet colors are selected by experts. You know you begin with a good color.

Lastly, isn't it logical that a room built up from the floor will have harmony and unity?

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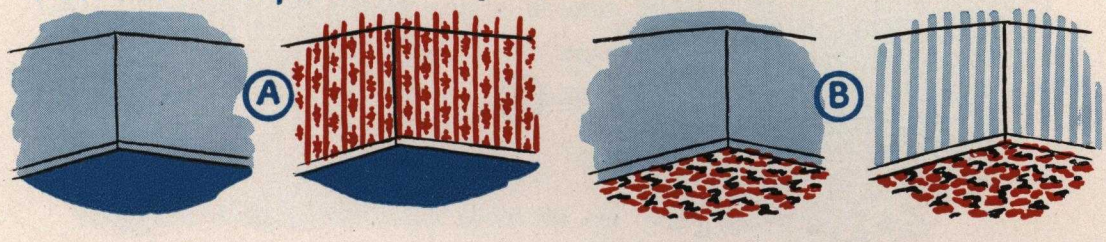
Color ? Whatever color you prefer . . . but don't be afraid of color! Choose gay and cheerful or deep and peaceful colors. Colors with character are as practical as dull, drab ones.

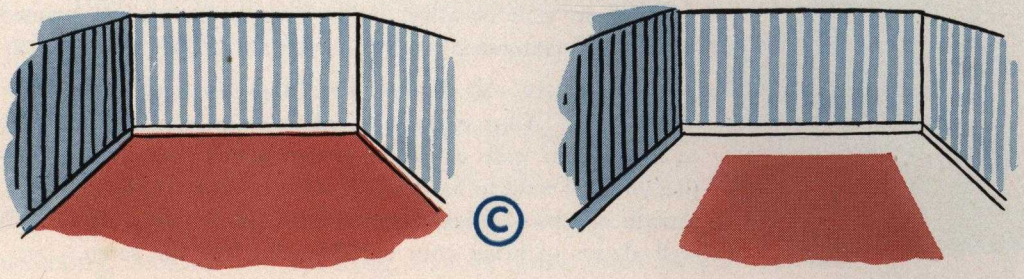
Patterned or plain? Make your decision on these facts:



With a plain or two-toned rug or carpet, you can use either patterned wallpaper or plain walls. You can use patterned upholstery, slipcovers and curtains.

With flowered or figured floor covering, plain walls are a safe choice. But you can also use small stripes or tiny figures on the walls or curtains and upholstery.

Size? The bigger the carpet, the bigger the room looks



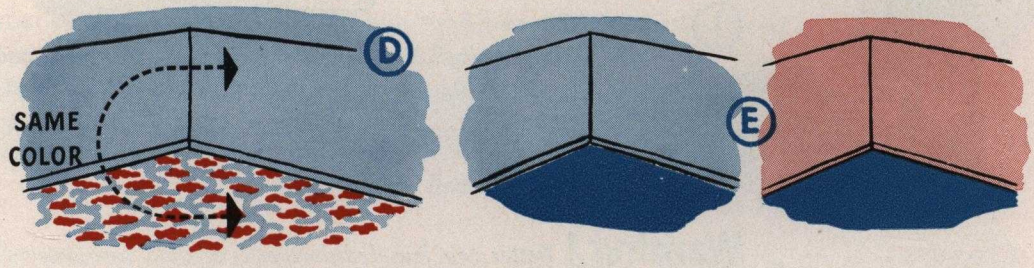
Wall-to-wall carpet is first choice. If not, try to have a rug that leaves no more than a 6 to 12 inch margin of floor showing.

YOUR WALLS Think of your floor covering!

Plain or two-toned floor covering? Refer back to sketch A—and use either figured or plain walls.

Flowered or figured carpet? Refer back to sketch B—and use plain walls, striped paper or a small figured paper.

Color ? Take your color cue from the floor



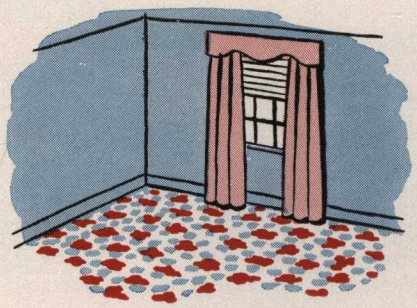
If floor covering is figured, select one of the main colors and use it in any shade you like. Carpet colors are good colors to use.

If floor covering is plain, your wall color or wallpaper can match or contrast. Paper should repeat carpet color in part.

Note! In selecting papers and paints from samples, remember: Wallpaper patterns look smaller on the wall. Colors look shades darker on the wall.

YOUR WINDOWS

Here again, think of your floor covering and think now of your walls, too!



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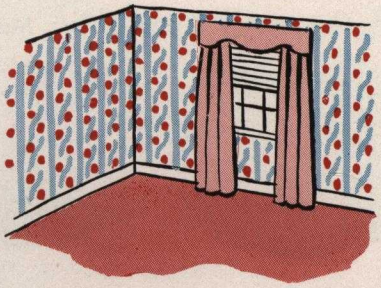
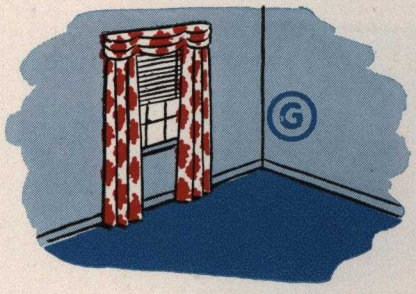


Patterned floor covering and plain walls **or** plain floor covering and patterned walls?

Plain color curtains are the safest choice. Or you can use stripes or small figures, but they require careful selection or your room will be busy-looking and restless.



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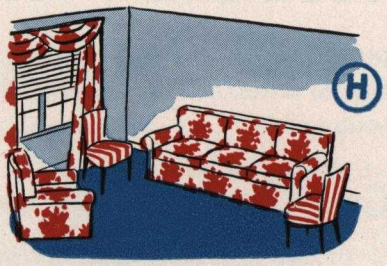
Plain floor covering and plain walls? The sky is the limit on pattern in your curtains. Bold chintzes, gay stripes, printed linens and cretonnes.

Color ? Your curtains, if plain color, can contrast with or match your walls or carpet. If they match your walls or carpet, you will want to use another color on your chairs and sofa, though one piece might be covered in the curtain color. It is well always to bring your curtain color into the room.

YOUR CHAIRS AND SOFA

Now you have built up from the floor to the walls, and thence to the windows. Next step is furniture coverings. In selecting these, you can refer directly back to the curtains, because they have been related to floor and walls.

Patterned curtains? A sure way to make a harmonious unit of your room is to slipcover sofa and/or one or two chairs in curtain fabric. Cover occasional chairs in plain or striped fabric of contrasting color.



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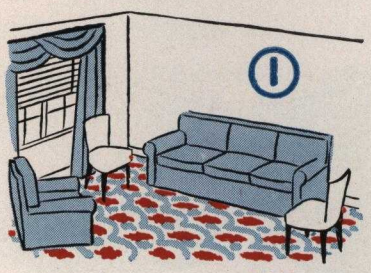

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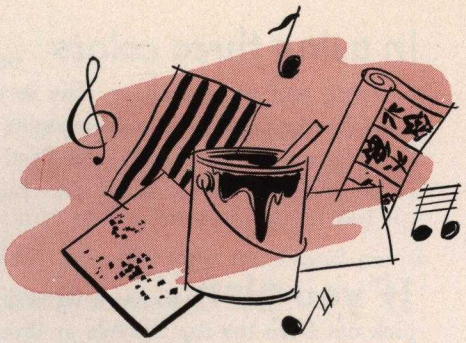
Plain curtains? Repeat the curtain color on couch and one or two big chairs. Use patterned fabric that repeats curtain color, in part, on several other chairs. Remember—if there is much pattern on floor or walls, use stripes or small scale designs.

Warning ! *Better too few definite patterns than too many.*

YOUR ACCESSORIES

If you can avoid it, and you should, don't buy cheap fill-ins. Go slow. Watch for things that you are sure are right and that appeal to you. Better too little than too much. The pair of fine lamps, the little tortoise shell box, or the porcelain figure . . . you love them but they cost so much! They are not extravagances, however. They are the accents, the finishing touches, the summing up of the owner's taste.

② Harmony



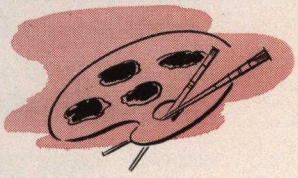
Color is the most powerful element in decorating. It can change size and shape. It can transform the drab and dreary. It can emphasize, unite and harmonize.

The first thing to remember about the use of color is *Use it!* Don't be afraid of it. The main thing wrong with most rooms right now is that the women who furnished them were timid about color. They wanted to be sure—so they got together a lot of browns and ended up with rooms that look like the Jersey meadows in mid-winter.

There are many complicated color systems. There are a lot of big words which might make you think the use of color is a mystery. You don't need to worry about them. Nor is it advisable to rush to the other extreme and throw together every color you have ever loved and expect the result to be beautiful.

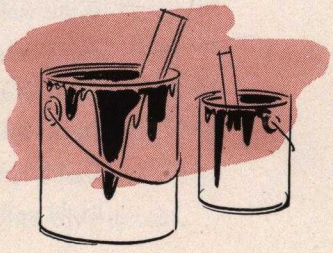
Few people are born with perfect color sense, but everyone likes some colors more than others and can, by doing a little selecting, looking and thinking, have a home that's bright and gay and cheerful and that makes her and her family feel good. Here we go with some rules, but they aren't complicated. They just are easy ways of using color.

Start by deciding what color you like best of all. This will be your main color. You will build your room on it. It will be your floor covering color (if figured, the principal color in it). Now you need a second color or shade to go with your main color. You probably won't be able to dream it up. Get some samples together, colored paper, bits of dress material.

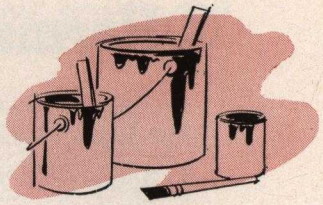


Try your main color with all these different colors or shades. Take your time. After you have looked at a combination a lot and still like it, you can be sure it is right. Now you can add your third color. The fewer colors you select, the easier it is to decorate. Don't be timid about your colors. Use colors that are fresh, but not brassy or harsh, of course.

In using two colors one color will always be used in greater quantity than the other. Go back to Section I on Selection. Your first color choice will be your floor covering color, repeated throughout the room as suggested there. You might use the second color on curtains, if you have decided on curtains that contrast with the floor. You would, then, repeat it in upholstery fabrics.



In using three colors one will dominate. Use it for floor covering and walls perhaps. The second will be less important. You may use the second color in curtains and chair coverings, on smaller areas than your first color. See Section I again. The third color will be an accent color for small side-chairs, pillows and accessories.



If you plan to use a figured rug, you can find your color scheme right there. Just pick out from the rug the two or three colors you wish to use and build your color scheme with them.

If you are interested, the color scheme you have selected may be one of three types:

Monochromatic . . . all of one color, such as an all-white room, or a room in varying shades of blue.

Analogous . . . related colors such as yellow, yellow-green and yellow-orange.

Complementary . . . colors opposite each other such as rose and green with a third color for accent.

Remember in planning your color scheme that there are warm and cool colors. Cool colors are those in which blue predominates. In warm colors, red predominates. If you like quiet, peaceful rooms, you have probably chosen a green or a blue as your dominant color. If you like gay, exciting rooms, your choice may have been rose, red or yellow. If your principal color is cool, your secondary color will probably be warm. One sets off the other.

Another good thing to remember is the more brilliant a color, the less of it should be used. Bright colors "advance." Greyed colors "retreat." Bright colored objects attract the eye and seem larger than softer colored ones.

Don't do one room in colors that clash with the room it opens into. Think of all connecting rooms together. They should be complementary to one another in color. In small homes, especially, this is important. If you want to make a little house or tiny apartment seem more spacious, use the same principal color in all adjoining rooms. Avoid monotony by using different (but harmonizing) colors for contrast.

Miscellaneous notes...

Dark walls make a room smaller.

Light walls make a room larger.

Small scattered wallpaper designs make a room larger.

Big wallpaper designs make a room smaller.

Wide wallpaper borders reduce ceiling height.

Horizontal stripes bring down the ceiling.

Vertical stripes push up the ceiling.

Dark ceiling color brings down the ceiling.

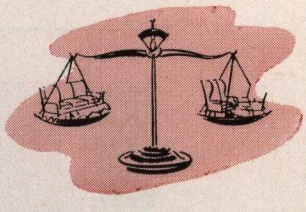
Dados (decoration on lower part of wall) bring down the ceiling.

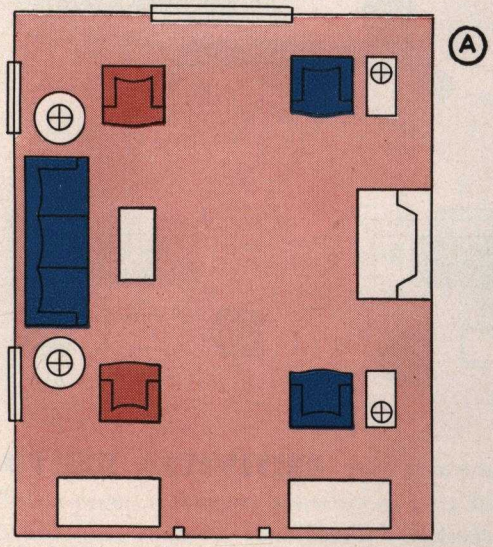
Light ceiling color pushes the ceiling up.

③ Arrangement

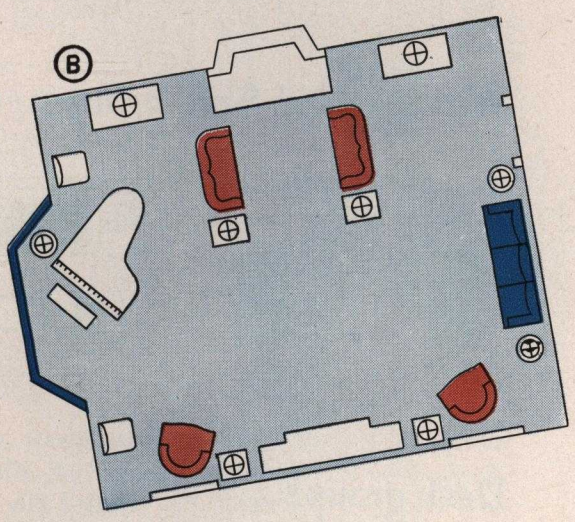
Two principles govern furniture arrangement . . . convenience and beauty. If you let convenience guide you, beauty will result. A chair looks awkward all by itself, because it doesn't look comfortable. It needs a table and a lamp. If it's a big upholstered chair, it still looks uncomfortable with a spindly little table and small lamp. Proper scale, essential to beauty, often results from convenience.

Another essential to beauty in a room is balance . . . the placing of furniture groups of equal "weight" on opposite walls so that the eye draws an imaginary line between them. The more such balanced groups you have in a room, the more restful the room is.





Room with three walls symmetrically arranged



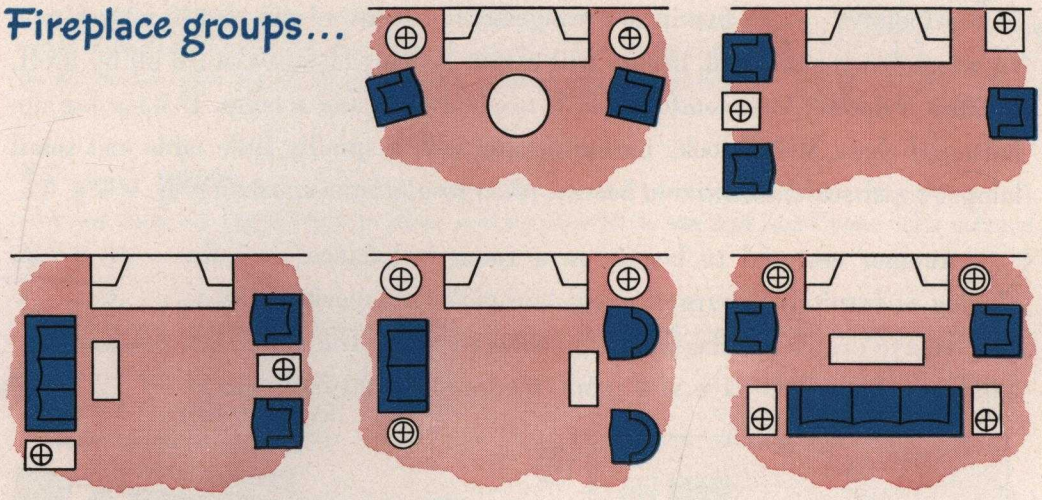
Room with two walls symmetrically arranged

The symmetrical arrangement of these balanced groups of furniture against their own walls is another thing to consider. The sketches above will help explain. In sketch A the sofa and two big chairs *balance* the fireplace and two big chairs. Furniture is *symmetrically* arranged on three walls. In sketch B the breakfront and two big chairs *balance* the fireplace and two loveseats. The sofa balances the piano. But only the fireplace and the wall opposite it are *symmetrically* arranged. Almost all rooms should have two walls, many have three walls, symmetrically arranged. Rooms without any symmetrical arrangement usually have a hit or miss look.

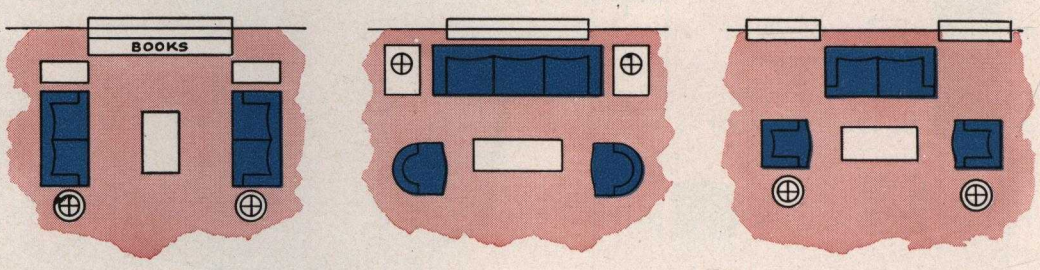
The first thing to do in deciding where to place your furniture is settle on your center of interest. Every room should have some point of concentration. If you have a fireplace, that is the logical choice. If not, decide what other part of your room, or what piece of your furniture, you want to feature. It might be a window with a view, or a sofa or desk. Place your main group of furniture first. On the next page are suggested arrangements for various centers of interest.

CENTER OF INTEREST GROUPS

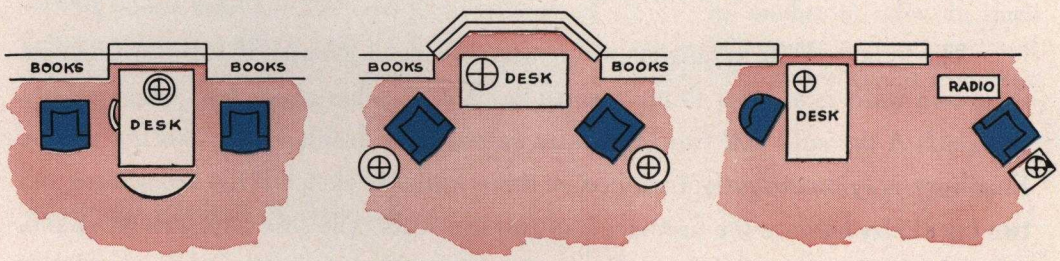
Fireplace groups...



Window and Sofa groups



Desk groups...

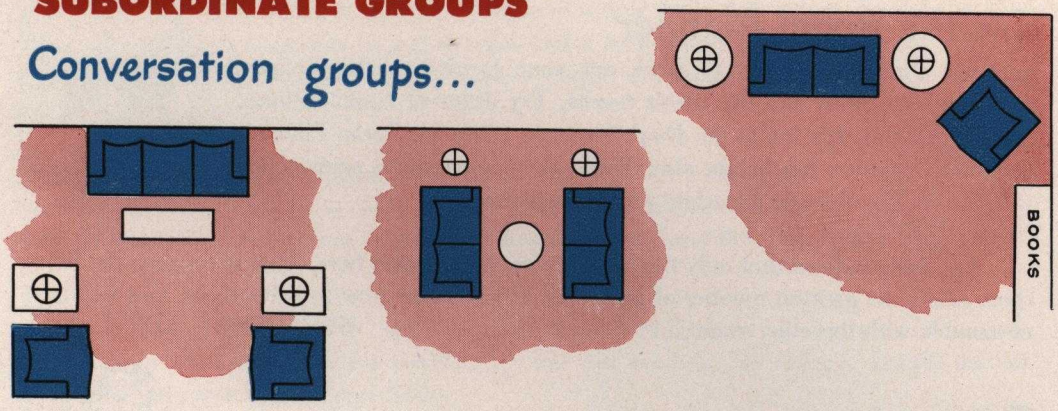


★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

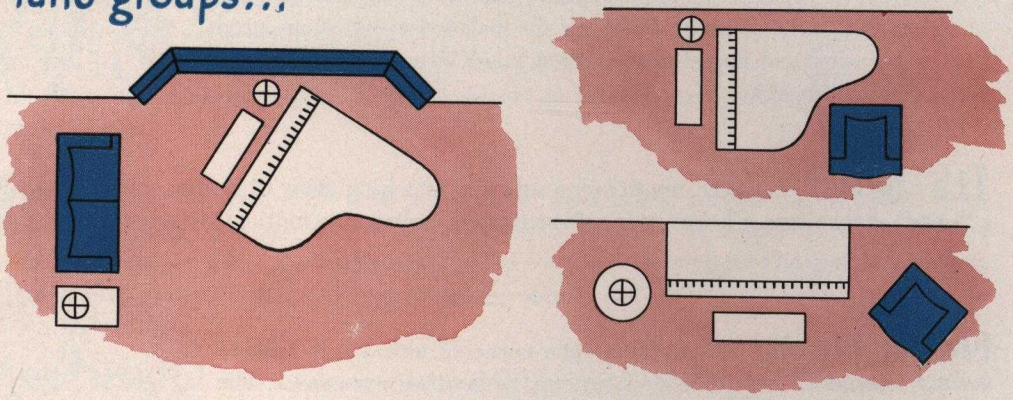
Next comes the placing of the subordinate groups of furniture. Again, remember beauty (scale and balance) and convenience. What do you use your living room for? *Conversation certainly*. Some of your furniture must be arranged for easy talking. For this, chairs should be placed no more than 6 or 8 feet apart. On the following page are some good arrangements. Any of these arrangements will be comfortable for *reading* also.

SUBORDINATE GROUPS

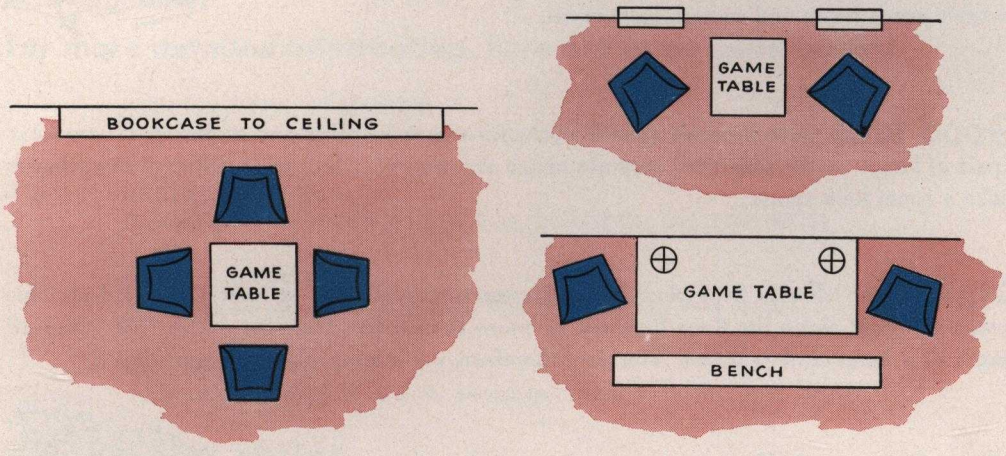
Conversation groups...



Piano groups...

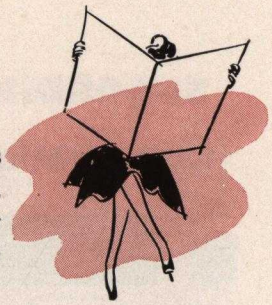


OTHER ACTIVITIES such as sewing, music, games should be planned for in your living room, if they are activities of your family. Any group of furniture that looks readily usable and suggests your family's interests and hobbies will be attractive. Decide what these groups are and place them, remembering that the more balance there is in a room, the more repose.



Traffic lanes You must be able to walk through your living room without hitting your shins or knocking over a lamp . . . convenience again. You need about 2 feet passage space to walk through easily. If you have to go from hall door to dining room, for instance, be sure you've allowed room without annoying detours.

Use the Room Planner

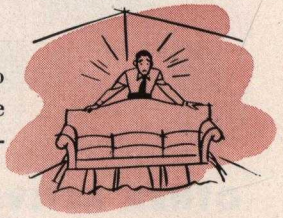


enclosed with this booklet to work out your furniture arrangements with the least effort and the surest results. Try different combinations, different groups. It's fun to do. Don't forget in using the Room Planner that your furniture has height also. Think of its appearance against the walls as well and build pleasing wall compositions.

You have noticed that only the living room is discussed here. This is because the living room offers the greatest number of problems. If you know how to solve these, you will have no trouble with the other rooms.

Remember your furniture arrangement will be much simplified by pairs of objects . . . pairs of tables, pairs of lamps, pairs of chairs. They are the easiest way to build up the balance every room needs. Except for wing and barrel chairs, it's a good idea always to get two upholstered chairs alike.

It's better however, not to buy a sofa and matching chair or chairs, commonly called a "suite" of furniture. Choose your sofa separately and you are more apt to get what you want.



Never Never put anything cater-cornered unless it is built to occupy a corner. Never place a scatter rug, table or sofa crosswise. The diagonal line created by the object and the walls of the room is disturbing and unpleasant. Also it makes the room look smaller.

Right height for a table is the same height as the arm of its companion chair or sofa. Many tables are too high.

Allow 13 inches between edge of sofa and coffee table, for comfortable arm's reach and enough knee room.

Good idea is to have all your lampshades match in color and material. If you have a pair of lamps by the sofa, they may not match the others . . . but many different lampshades make a room look spotty.

Plan for double floor plugs (duplex convenience outlets) at least every 12 feet. This means no point along the floor line will be more than 6 feet from an outlet. The standard length of a lamp cord is 6 feet. You can, therefore, put a lamp wherever you want it.

Horizontal lines are restful. A room that has many such lines . . . low, straight back sofa, low straight bookcases, horizontal pictures . . . will have repose. Vertical lines are stimulating. High secretaries, breakfronts, long mirrors and pictures all lead the eye up. For most rooms an agreeable balance of both high and low pieces is desirable.

Speaking of balance, you get a feeling of weight from dark colors. Two chairs may be the same size but cover one in a dark color and it looks heavier than a light colored one. Remember this and distribute color to balance weight and create effective contrast between light and dark colors.

Disguise upholstered pieces that seem too large for your room by covering them in the same color as your wall, if they are against the wall. Or same color as the floor covering, if they stand out from the wall.

Too little furniture and too much space? Still abide by the rules of convenience. Group what you have for comfortable use, for reading, for talking. Forget the far corners of the room for the time being.

Don't worry about periods in furniture. The average person isn't going to pick out a Louis XV gilt chair or piece of Italian Baroque. What you buy will look well if related in scale and harmonized by color. Don't try to match woods either. Different woods go together and give interest.

Best to paint woodwork the same color as the walls unless you have a very large room that needs breaking up or you wish to call attention to especially handsome woodwork. If you are using wallpaper select the background color for your woodwork. Flat paints are more attractive than glossy finishes, although not as durable.

Most useful sizes for bookshelves are 10 inches, 11 inches, and 12 inches, vertical space, by 10 inches deep. Most books will go in the 10 inch high shelves. If you have many big books, you may want one 14-inch shelf. Put the largest shelf at the bottom, graduating sizes upward.

Don't discuss your plans with too many people. Everybody will have an idea and a criticism to offer. You'll become completely confused. Follow the basic rules you've learned here. Take your own time. Make up your own mind and stick to your own plans.

For more detailed information, here are some good books:

BURRIS-MEYER, ELIZABETH
Decorating Livable Homes. New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1942 ($5.00)

DRAPER, DOROTHY
Decorating Is Fun! New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1940 ($2.79)

GILLIES, MARY DAVIS
Popular Home Decoration. New York: Wm. H. Wise & Co., 1940 ($3.95)

MILLER, GLADYS
Decoratively Speaking. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., 1939 ($4.00)

WHITON, SHERRILL
Elements of Interior Decoration. New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1937 ($4.00)

WRIGHT, RICHARDSON
House and Garden's Complete Guide to Interior Decoration. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1942 ($5.00). (Out of print for the duration. Your Public Library may have it.)

Now that you have the basic principles of decorating in mind, turn to the Room Planner and have fun making a plan for your room of tomorrow. Make a work sheet like the decorator's plan on the cover. You can do it easily with the Room Planner, following the rules in this little book.

When you can make these plans realities, remember . . . you should start with the floor. Start with a beautiful rug or carpet. You will find it at your Bigelow Dealer, marked by the blue and gold label. When war work is done, Bigelow Weavers will again make rugs and carpets of lasting beauty.

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